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Senator Nofs and members of the Senate Energy & Technology Committee

Michigan Recycling Coalition opposes House Bills 4265 & 4266 and urges members to vote NO: Ending Michigan's Landfill Yard Waste Ban; Provide for Facilities with Methane Capture

Honorable Senators,

Landfills are important. We depend on them to dispose of our waste, to protect us, our air and water from more and more complex products. And, we will continue to need them until we have successfully found ways to divert our waste to higher and better uses.

Collectively we are responsible for these expensive and highly engineered feats of civil engineering. But they will require monitoring into perpetuity, because ultimately they are a public liability.

Organic waste, however, is not harmful. In fact, it's essential to renewing soil health and fertility. So, not only does it not require over-priced heroic measures to manage but we are depleting our soils by putting yard waste in the landfill. The ultimate cost to us, to our farmers, our municipalities, to our local businesses, landscapers and gardeners will far outweigh any benefit derived from the production of gas for energy.

We have asked residents to separate waste at the curb so we can manage these materials as commodities. Commodities that have value on the market and that are being put to use to the benefit of Michigan's economy and environment.

We think it's very appropriate for the state to play a role in maintaining good policy that supports a thriving diversity of forward-thinking businesses that are providing feedstock and product to Michigan manufacturers, businesses, institutions, and residents.

Making the transition from managing waste to managing commodities is going to take time and investment but it is happening and we all stand to benefit.

The yard waste ban came out of a need to reduce our dependence on landfills that no one wants in their backyard. Public and private organizations have been investing in alternatives to disposal for the past 30 years and the recovery industry is betting that investment in recycling and composting will continue because it makes dollars and sense.

Sincerely,

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